

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY NEA:AR DAY:TH

APPROVED BY NEA:ALATHERTON, JR.

S/S:RPERITO

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 291578 TOSEC 310274

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, IS, LE

SUBJECT: ACTION MEMORANDUM: SOUTHERN LEBANON (S/S
NUMBER 7624642)

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM NEA - ATHERTON

REF: (A) BEIRUT 82, (B) CAIRO 16510

1. THE PROBLEM: WE HAVE NOW RECEIVED LANE'S REPORT OF SARKIS' VIEWS ON THE POINTS RAISED BY THE ISRAELIS CONCERNING MAINTENANCE OF SECURITY IN SOUTHERN LEBANON. WE NEED NOW TO RESPOND TO THE ISRAELIS. WE ALSO HAVE AN EXPRESSION OF CONCERN BY FAHMY ABOUT ISRAELI INTENTIONS TOWARD SOUTHERN LEBANON (CAIRO REFTEL) TO WHICH WE SHOULD RESPOND. FINALLY, WE TOLD KHADDAM WE WOULD BE HAPPY TO KEEP THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT INFORMED ABOUT FURTHER CONTACTS WITH SARKIS, AND SHOULD REPORT ON THIS LATEST DISCUSSION.

2. DISCUSSION: SARKIS HAS TOLD LANE THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO USE THE EXISTING CHRISTIAN FORCES ALONG THE SOUTHERN BORDER AS AN INSTRUMENT OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

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IN ESTABLISHING CONTROL IN THE AREA. THEY ARE TOO WEAK,

HE ASSERTS, AND THEIR USE WOULD CAUSE A POLITICAL STORM AMONG VARIOUS LEBANESE FACTIONS. WITH RESPECT TO USE OF THE ARAB SECURITY FORCES, HE SAID HE WOULD HOLD OFF ON ANY FURTHER SOUTHWARD MOVEMENT PENDING PRIOR CONSULTATION WITH

US, BUT HE BELIEVED TYRE MUST BE OCCUPIED AND THAT THE ASF WAS THE ONLY AVAILABLE FORCE FOR THAT PURPOSE. HE WAS LESS INSISTENT TO LANE ABOUT PUTTING ASF TROOPS INTO NABATIYYAH, BUT THOUGHT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO CONTROL THE ROUTE FROM ZAHRANI (SITE OF THE REFINERY SOUTH OF SIDON ON THE COAST) THROUGH NABATIYYAH, MARJAYUN AND ON UP TO MASNAA IN ORDER TO DOMINATE PALESTINIAN CONCENTRATIONS. (THE LARGEST PALESTINIAN CONCENTRATIONS IN THE SOUTH ARE AT TYRE AND NABATIYYAH.)

3. I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT EITHER WE OR THE ISRAELIS ARE IN A POSITION TO SECOND-GUESS SARKIS ABOUT THE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF HIS EMPLOYING THE CHRISTIAN FORCES ALONG THE BORDER. ON THAT ISSUE, I THINK WE SHOULD TELL THE ISRAELIS WHAT SARKIS HAS SAID AND GIVE THEM OUR JUDGMENT THAT WE PROBABLY HAVE TO TAKE THIS AT FACE VALUE. YOU WILL RECALL THAT RABIN MENTIONED USE OF THE LOCAL CHRISTIAN ELEMENTS SIMPLY AS A SUGGESTION.

4. ON THE MORE SERIOUS QUESTION OF THE EMPLOYMENT OF ASF--WHICH MEANS ESSENTIALLY SYRIAN--UNITS SOUTHWARD OF WHERE THEY ARE NOW STATIONED, I THINK WE SHOULD NOT ONLY PASS ALONG SARKIS' JUDGMENTS BUT ALSO GIVE THE ISRAELIS OUR OWN ASSESSMENT AS WELL. WHILE WE UNDERSTAND WHY THE ISRAELIS WANT TO KEEP SYRIAN TROOPS FROM GOING FURTHER SOUTH--THEY APPARENTLY WANT FREEDOM OF ACTION IN THE ENTIRE SOUTHERN AREA THEMSELVES WITHOUT THE RISK OF ENCOUNTERING SYRIAN FORCES--I DO NOT BELIEVE THIS IS A TENABLE POSITION. IF WE HELPED INDUCE SARKIS AND THE SYRIANS TO KEEP THEIR FORCES WHERE THEY ARE IN THE NORTH, AND THE ISRAELIS THEN INTERVENED TO DEAL WITH SOME PALESTINIAN THREAT, NOT ONLY WOULD WE BE SERIOUSLY EMBARRASSED OURSELVES BUT THE SYRIANS WOULD PROBABLY FIND IT IMPOSSIBLE POLITICALLY TO REFRAIN FROM SOME RESPONSE. MOREOVER, WE AGREE WITH SARKIS THAT LEAVING

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THE PORT OF TYRE OPEN AND IN PALESTINIAN HANDS MAKES CONTROL OF THE SOUTH VERY DIFFICULT, WHILE ON THE OTHER HAND AN ASF OPERATION TO CLOSE THE PORT COULD BE KEPT RELATIVELY ISOLATED FROM THE REST OF THE SOUTHERN REGION. AS FOR NABATIYYAH, IT IS NORTH OF THE LITANI RIVER AND IS THUS SEPARATED FROM THE ISRAELI BORDER AREA BY THAT DISTINCT AND FORMIDABLE GEOGRAPHIC OBSTACLE.

5. I BELIEVE, THEREFORE, THAT, WHILE EXPRESSING FULL SYMPATHY FOR ISRAEL'S DESIRE TO KEEP HER BORDER AREA FREE OF POTENTIAL RISK, WE MUST MAKE AN EFFORT TO GET THE ISRAELIS TO DRAW A DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE TYRE-NABATIYYAH AREA, WHERE SARKIS BELIEVES SYRIAN UNITS ARE NEEDED TO CONTROL MAJOR PALESTINIAN CONCENTRATIONS, AND THE

SOUTHERN AREA CLOSER TO THE BORDER, WHERE SARKIS AND THE SYRIANS SAY THEY HAVE NO INTENTION OF GOING IN ANY CASE. I BELIEVE WE SHOULD GIVE ISRAEL SARKIS' REACTION AND OUR OWN ASSESSMENT THAT:

-- ASF PRESENCE IN NABATIYYAH AND ESPECIALLY TYRE IS THE BEST AVAILABLE SECURITY AGAINST HOSTILE PALESTINIAN ACTION;

-- WHILE NEITHER THE SYRIANS NOR SARKIS CAN GUARANTEE AGAINST PALESTINIAN OPERATIONS, BASIC DEPENDENCE ON THEIR EFFORTS IS THE PREFERABLE COURSE;

-- THE ISRAELIS SHOULD UNDERSTAND THAT IF THEY INTERVENE WITH THEIR OWN FORCES, PARTICULARLY AFTER WE HAD HELPED KEEP ASF ELEMENTS OUT OF THE AREA, WE WOULD BE UNABLE TO SUPPORT THEM POLITICALLY AND THEY WOULD RISK SERIOUSLY COMPROMISING SARKIS' RECONCILIATION EFFORTS. I ATTACH (ATTACHMENT 1), FOR YOUR APPROVAL, TALKING POINTS THAT LARRY EAGLEBURGER MIGHT USE WITH DINITZ.

6. WITH RESPECT TO FAHMY'S QUERIES, YOU HAVE APPROVED A RESPONSE TO HIM ON THE NATURE OF OUR CONTACTS WITH THE SYRIANS, ISRAELIS AND SARKIS (TOSEC 310207). IN VIEW OF FAHMY'S NEW POINTS, I PROPOSE AN ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTION TO EILTS AND ATTACH (ATTACHMENT 2) A TELEGRAM TO CAIRO
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FOR YOUR APPROVAL.

7. WHEN MURPHY LAST SAW KHADDAM, HE WAS INSTRUCTED TO SAY THAT LANE WOULD BE HAVING A FURTHER TALK WITH SARKIS AND WE WOULD BE HAPPY TO KEEP THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT INFORMED. I ENCLOSE A DRAFT TELEGRAM FOR MURPHY (ATTACHMENT 3) BRINGING KHADDAM UP TO DATE ON THIS RECENT CONVERSATION WITH SARKIS.

8. BEGIN TEXT ATTACHMENT 1 - TALKING POINTS FOR EAGLEBURGER TO USE WITH DINITZ:

-- LANE HAD A FURTHER TALK WITH SARKIS NOVEMBER 29. HE PRESSED SARKIS ON THE POSSIBILITY OF USING A LEBANESE FORCE TO MAINTAIN SECURITY IN THE SOUTH, NOTING THAT

BOTH ISRAELI AND SYRIAN GOVERNMENTS TOLD US THEY THOUGHT THIS THE BEST SOLUTION. HE FURTHER STATED THAT OUR CONTACTS HAD LED US TO THE ASSESSMENT THAT ANY OTHER SOLUTION WOULD RISK DESTABILIZING THE SITUATION IN THE SOUTH. AS A POSSIBLE OPTION, LANE ASKED WHETHER THE LARGELY CHRISTIAN FORCES ALREADY IN BEING IN THE BORDER VILLAGES COULD BE BUILT ON OR COULD BE USED AS AN INSTRUMENT OF CENTRAL LEBANESE AUTHORITY.

-- ON THE LATTER POINT, SARKIS SAID THE USE OF THESE FORCES WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR BOTH MILITARY AND POLITICAL REASONS. THEY WERE MILITARILY TOO WEAK AND DID NOT THEMSELVES CONTROL THE WHOLE BORDER. POLITICALLY, THEY WERE SO IDENTIFIED WITH THE CHRISTIAN SIDE IN THE CIVIL WAR THAT TO USE THEM AS A QUOTE LEBANESE UNQUOTE FORCE WOULD BRING A POLITICAL STORM AMONG LEBANESE FACTIONS AND WOULD THREATEN HIS EFFORTS TOWARD POLITICAL RECONCILIATION.

-- SARKIS HAD ALREADY TOLD LANE NOVEMBER 25 THAT HE SAW NO POSSIBILITY IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE OF USING A LEBANESE FORCE TO REESTABLISH SECURITY IN SOUTHERN LEBANON. HE HAD FIVE SEPARATE LEBANESE FORCES, HE SAID, WHICH WOULD FIRST HAVE TO BE MELDED INTO A UNIFIED WHOLE. THIS WOULD TAKE TIME, AND MEANWHILE HE SAW NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO USE THE ARAB SECURITY FORCE UNDER HIS COMMAND.

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-- SARKIS SAID, HOWEVER, THAT HE HAD GIVEN CLEAR ORDERS THAT THERE WAS TO BE NO FURTHER SOUTHWARD MOVEMENT OF THE ASF PRIOR TO CONSULTATION WITH THE U.S.

-- HE STRESSED IN PARTICULAR THE NEED TO CONTROL THE PORT OF TYRE, THROUGH WHICH HE SAID THE LEBANESE ARAB ARMY AND THE PALESTINIANS WERE CONTINUING TO BE RESUPPLIED. HE BELIEVED THE FAILURE TO OCCUPY TYRE RISKED THE COLLAPSE OF THE WHOLE PACIFICATION PLAN. HE APPEARED TO CONSIDER THAT A BATTALION OF ABOUT 600 MEN WOULD BE NECESSARY FOR THIS.

-- SARKIS ALSO MENTIONED THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTROLLING PALESTINIAN CONCENTRATIONS AT SARAFAND (NEAR THE COAST SOUTH OF SIDON) AND NABATIYYAH. WHILE HIS MILITARY ADVISORS WERE INTERESTED IN STATIONING ASF UNITS ALONG THE MASNAA-MARJAYUN-NABATIYYAH-ZAHRANI ROAD, HE HAD NO PRESENT INTENTION OF SENDING ASF UNITS SOUTH OF TYRE AND NABATIYYAH.

-- WE MADE TO KHADDAM NOVEMBER 26 ESSENTIALLY THE SAME POINTS THAT LANE MADE TO SARKIS. KHADDAM SAID THE

DECISION ON MOVEMENT OF ASF UNITS WAS FOR SARKIS TO MAKE. HE THOUGHT SARKIS WOULD SOON FIND IT POSSIBLE TO PUT SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF LEBANESE FORCES IN THE SOUTH, BUT THIS WOULD REQUIRE WEEKS RATHER THAN DAYS TO PREPARE. KHADDAM HAD EARLIER GIVEN AS THE SYRIAN OPINION THAT A LEBANESE FORCE WOULD BE THE PREFERABLE WAY TO ENSURE SECURITY IN THE AREA.

-- HAVING NOW HAD FRANK AND THOROUGH EXCHANGES OF VIEWS

WITH THE ISRAELIS, SARKIS AND THE SYRIANS, WE HAVE REACHED SOME TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS OF OUR OWN IN ASSESSING THE SOUTHERN LEBANESE SITUATION.

-- WE FULLY SHARE WITH ISRAEL THE AIM OF PREVENTING THE REGROWTH OF ANTI-ISRAELI ACTIVITY BY THE PALESTINIANS FROM SOUTHERN LEBANON. WITH THIS AIM IN MIND, WE ALSO SHARE THE ISRAELI BELIEF THAT THE PALESTINIAN FORCES SHOULD BE PREVENTED FROM REESTABLISHING THEMSELVES IN
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FORCE IN THAT AREA. WE HAVE FOUND, IN FACT, THAT THIS AIM IS SHARED BY THE SYRIANS AND BY SARKIS AS WELL. WE ARE THEREFORE FACED WITH THE QUESTION OF MEANS.

-- IT IS OUR ASSESSMENT THAT THE ONLY FEASIBLE AND EFFECTIVE SECURITY FORCE AT SARKIS' DISPOSAL FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS WILL BE THE ARAB SECURITY FORCE, CONSISTING PRIMARILY OF SYRIANS. WE DO NOT BELIEVE WE CAN SECOND-GUESS HIM ON USE OF THE CHRISTIAN FORCES NOW ALONG THE BORDER.

-- WE APPRECIATE THAT ISRAEL WOULD PREFER TO HAVE NO SECURITY FORCE IN SOUTHERN LEBANON RATHER THAN TO HAVE THE LARGELY-SYRIAN ASF EMPLOYED THERE. WE HAVE THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ON THIS POSITION, HOWEVER:

(A) WE ASSUME THE ISRAELI POINT IS THAT THEY WOULD WISH TO BE FREE TO INTERVENE AGAINST THREATENING PALESTINIAN ACTIVITIES IN THIS AREA WITHOUT THE DANGER OF ENCOUNTERING SYRIAN FORCES;

(B) IN OUR VIEW, SUCH INTERVENTION IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, EVEN IF IT WERE LIMITED IN TIME AND SCOPE, COULD HAVE EXTREMELY DESTABILIZING EFFECTS BOTH WITH RESPECT TO SYRIA AND WITH RESPECT TO SARKIS' PACIFICATION AND RECONCILIATION PROGRAM;

(C) WITH SYRIAN FORCES STATIONED IN THE NEAR VICINITY SOUTH OF SIDON, EVEN IF UNDER SARKIS' COMMAND, THE

SYRIANS WOULD IN OUR VIEW FIND IT VERY DIFFICULT TO AVOID
REACTING TO ANY ISRAELI MILITARY MOVE INTO LEBANON;

(D) PARTICULARLY IF WE HAD BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN ARRANGING
FOR THE ASF TO REMAIN OUTSIDE THIS AREA, WE OURSELVES
WOULD BE EMBARRASSED BY ISRAELI INTERVENTION AND WOULD BE
UNABLE TO SUPPORT IT POLITICALLY.

-- WE CAN UNDERSTAND ISRAELI RELUCTANCE TO HAVE SYRIAN OR
OTHER NON-LEBANESE FORCES IN AREAS ADJOINING THE BORDER,

BUT THIS IN ANY CASE DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE SARKIS' OR
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SYRIA'S INTENTION. BOTH HAVE TOLD US EXPLICITLY THEY DO
NOT DESIRE THIS. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE QUESTION WHY A
LIMITED ASF PRESENCE IN TYRE AND THE VICINITY OF
NABATIYYAH WOULD BE A PROBLEM FOR ISRAEL. THE FORCE IN
TYRE COULD BE LIMITED TO THE CITY AND THE IMMEDIATE
ENVIRONS WHERE THE PALESTINIAN CAMPS ARE LOCATED, AND
COULD CLOSE THE PORT, WHICH ACCORDING TO OUR INFORMATION
IS IN FACT BEING USED TO SUPPLY THE PALESTINIANS WITH
MEN AND EQUIPMENT. AS FOR NABATIYYAH, IT IS NORTH OF
THE LITANI.

-- FROM OUR CONTACTS WITH SARKIS AND THE SYRIANS WE ARE
PERSUADED THAT BOTH UNDERSTAND THOROUGHLY THE SENSITIVITY
OF THE SOUTHERN LEBANESE AREA AND WILL BE PREPARED TO
DELIMIT RIGOROUSLY THE LOCATION AND ACTIVITY OF ANY ASF
UNIT SENT IN FOR SECURITY PURPOSES. WE ARE ALSO PERSUADED
THAT SARKIS AND THE SYRIANS SEE IT IN THEIR INTEREST TO
USE SUCH UNITS TO CONTROL PALESTINIAN ACTIVITY.

-- IT WOULD BE UNREALISTIC TO EXPECT ANY SWEEPING
GUARANTEE AGAINST ALL PALESTINIAN TERRORIST ACTIVITY
WHATEVER THE SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS MAY BE, AND ISRAEL
WILL HAVE TO WEIGH THE CHANCES OF SOME LIMITED ACTIVITY
AGAINST THE POLITICAL DISADVANTAGES, INCLUDING THE DAMAGE
TO SARKIS' POSITION, OF EFFORTS TO STAMP IT OUT BY USE OF
ISRAELI FORCES.

-- WE HAVE GIVEN NO INDICATION WHATEVER TO SARKIS AND THE
SYRIANS OF OUR VIEWS ALONG THE ABOVE LINES, AND IN FACT
HAVE IMPRESSED ON THEM THE RISKS OF MOVING ASF UNITS
FURTHER SOUTH. WE BELIEVE IT UNLIKELY THAT SUCH UNITS
WILL BE MOVED WITHOUT OUR FIRST BEING INFORMED. WE WILL
AWAIT ISRAELI REACTION. END TEXT.

9. RECOMMENDATION: THAT YOU APPROVE THE FOREGOING TEXT.

APPROVE.....DISAPPROVE.....

10. ATTACHMENT 2 - TELEGRAM TO CAIRO. BEGIN TEXT:

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TO: CAIRO IMMEDIATE
FOR AMBASSADOR FROM THE SECRETARY
E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, IS, US, LE
SUBJECT: FAHMY'S CONCERN ABOUT ISRAELI INTENTIONS
REF: CAIRO 16510

YOU WILL HAVE RECEIVED BY SEPARATE TELEGRAM POINTS TO
MAKE TO FAHMY IN ANSWER TO AN EARLIER QUERY. IN THE LIGHT
OF HIS FURTHER CONCERNS (REFTEL) YOU SHOULD ADD THE
FOLLOWING POINTS FROM ME:

-- REGARDING MY LETTERS TO ASAD AND SADAT, I OF COURSE
WROTE TO BOTH LEADERS ON THE SAME OCCASION, WHICH WAS SO
FULL OF CONSEQUENCE FOR MY RELATIONS WITH THEM. BEYOND
THAT, HOWEVER, MY LETTER TO SADAT WAS IN A FAR MORE
PERSONAL VEIN, REFLECTIVE OF MY CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH
HIM. THE LETTERS WERE CERTAINLY NOT IDENTICAL.

-- I AGREE WITH FAHMY'S VIEW THAT THE SYRIANS HAVE NO
WISH TO BE DRAGGED BY THE PALESTINIANS INTO A CONFLICT
WITH ISRAEL. I ALSO AGREE THAT ISRAEL HAS NO INTEREST
IN PRECIPITATING HOSTILITIES WITH SYRIA. WHAT MAY HAPPEN
OVER THE LONGER RUN DEPENDS ON SO MANY FACTORS THAT I AM
RELUCTANT TO SPECULATE. IF THERE IS ANY CONCERN THAT
ISRAEL MIGHT TRY TO QUOTE BLACKEN THE U.S. IMAGE IN THE
ARAB WORLD UNQUOTE, IT IS ALL THE MORE IMPORTANT THAT
WE KEEP IN CLOSE TOUCH TO AVOID MISUNDERSTANDINGS.

-- I THINK THE SAUDIS ARE UNNECESSARILY CONCERNED IN
BELIEVING THAT THE ISRAELI REINFORCEMENT ON THEIR NORTHERN
BORDER SIGNALS INTENTION TO ATTACK LEBANON. WE BELIEVE
THE ISRAELI MOVE WAS INTENDED TO EMPHASIZE ISRAELI CONCERN
ABOUT THE PALESTINIAN ACTIVITY IN THE SOUTH OF LEBANON
AND ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF SYRIAN FORCES BEING MOVED
INTO THAT AREA.

-- FAHMY MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN A BRIEF SUMMARY OF LANE'S
TALK WITH SARKIS ABOUT THE PROBLEM OF SOUTHERN LEBANON
ON NOVEMBER 29. SARKIS SAID THERE WERE IN HIS OPINION
NO LEBANESE FORCES THAT COULD MAINTAIN SECURITY IN SOUTH-
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ERN LEBANON FOR THE NEAR FUTURE. THE CHRISTIAN ELEMENTS ALONG THE BORDER WERE TOO WEAK AND THEIR USE IN A BROADER AREA WOULD BE TOO DIVISIVE. MEANWHILE, THERE WERE FIVE SEPARATE LEBANESE FORCES THAT HAD TO BE MELDED INTO ONE FORCE BEFORE BEING USED BY THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT TO MAINTAIN SECURITY.

-- SARKIS WAS CONCERNED THAT IF HE DID NOT USE ARAB SECURITY FORCE UNITS TO CLOSE THE PORT OF TYRE TO THE PALESTINIANS AS A RESUPPLY ROUTE THE WHOLE PACIFICATION PLAN WOULD BE JEOPARDIZED. HE ALSO THOUGHT IT IMPORTANT TO USE ASF ELEMENTS IN MAINTAINING CONTROL OVER PALESTINIAN CONCENTRATIONS IMMEDIATELY SOUTH OF SIDON AND IN NABATIYYAH.

-- SARKIS UNDERSTANDS ISRAELI SENSITIVITY ABOUT FURTHER SOUTHWARD MOVEMENT OF THE ASF, BUT BELIEVES, NONETHELESS, THAT THESE LIMITED MISSIONS FOR THE ASF IN THE SOUTH ARE IMPORTANT. (CONTRARY TO FAHMY'S IMPRESSION, THERE ARE SO FAR AS WE KNOW NO SYRIAN CONTINGENTS IN TYRE OR NABATIYYAH.)

-- WE WILL CONTINUE OUR CONTACTS WITH THE ISRAELIS, SYRIANS AND SARKIS, TO HELP WORK OUT A SOLUTION TO THE SECURITY PROBLEM IN THE REGION. AS YOU HAVE TOLD FAHMY, WE WILL IN THE COURSE OF THESE CONTACTS CONTINUE TO URGE RESTRAINT ON THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT. END TEXT.

11. RECOMMENDATION: THAT YOU APPROVE THE FOREGOING TELEGRAM.

APPROVE.....DISAPPROVE.....

12. ATTACHMENT 3 - TELEGRAM TO DAMASCUS. BEGIN TEXT:

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TO: DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

FOR AMBASSADOR FROM THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, IS, LE

SUBJECT: SOUTHERN LEBANON

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REF: DAMASCUS 8166

YOU INFORMED KHADDAM THAT LANE WOULD BE HAVING A FURTHER

TALK WITH SARKIS AND THAT WE WOULD BE HAPPY TO KEEP
THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT INFORMED. YOU SHOULD NOW MAKE
THE FOLLOWING POINTS TO HIM:

-- LANE SAW SARKIS NOVEMBER 29 FOR A FURTHER DISCUSSION
OF THE PROBLEM OF SECURITY IN SOUTHERN LEBANON. HE
ASKED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF USING THE CHRISTIAN
FORCES ALONG THE SOUTHERN BORDER AS A BASIS FOR A
LEBANESE SECURITY FORCE THROUGHOUT THE SOUTH. SARKIS
SAID THAT SUCH FORCES WERE TOO WEAK AND THEIR USE WOULD
BE TOO DIVISIVE POLITICALLY. HE HAD EARLIER TOLD US
THAT HE SAW NO POSSIBILITY OF PUTTING-A SUBSTANTIAL
ENOUGH LEBANESE FORCE INTO THE FIELD FOR THE IMMEDIATE
FUTURE, AND HE THEREFORE BELIEVED ONLY THE ARAB SECURITY
FORCE WAS AVAILABLE FOR THE PRESENT.

-- SARKIS THOUGHT IT PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT THAT AN ASF
UNIT BE SENT TO TYRE TO CLOSE THE PORT AGAINST RESUPPLY
OF THE PALESTINIAN ELEMENTS IN THE SOUTH. HE ALSO
THOUGHT IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE TO USE ASF UNITS TO

CONTROL PALESTINIAN CONCENTRATIONS SOUTH OF SIDON AND IN
NABATIYYAH.

-- SINCE WE HAD STRESSED TO SARKIS THAT FURTHER SOUTHWARD
MOVEMENT OF THE ASF COULD BE DESTABILIZING, HE TOLD LANE
THAT NO UNITS WOULD BE MOVED IN THIS DIRECTION WITHOUT
CONSULTATION WITH US.

-- WE WILL CONTINUE OUR CONTACTS WITH THE ISRAELIS AND
WITH SARKIS IN AN EFFORT TO HELP WORK OUT A SOLUTION TO
THE SECURITY PROBLEM IN THE SOUTH, AND WILL KEEP THE
SYRIANS INFORMED.

-- ANY VIEWS THAT THEY MAY HAVE WOULD OF COURSE BE MORE
THAN WELCOMED.

13. RECOMMENDATION: THAT YOU APPROVE THE FOREGOING
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TELEGRAM.

APPROVE.....DISAPPROVE.....

14. DRAFTED:NEA:AR DAY:TH
APPROVED:NEA:ALATHERTON, JR.
CLEARED: S/S: RPERITO S: HCOLLUMS

ROBINSON

SECRET

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